
Title: Verbal Abuse I, Vol I

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The following stories were
handpicked by myself and
my trusty staff
here at Pendragon
Publishing.

Story 1: On the
Amur River, in the tribe

of the Nanai, the ones
who most loved to fight
were the men of the
Beldy clan. They were
always rushing off to
attack another clan's
village, or defending
themselves from a clan

that had come for
revenge. They neglected
their hunting. They
neglected their fishing.
They got so bad, they
felt lost when they
weren't fighting. They
just sat around and

waited for the next
war. And every year, there
were fewer of them left
alive. Now, into this clan
was born a pair of twins
whose names were Chubak
and Udog. The Beldies
were careful to honor

the boys, because they
knew that twins are good
luck. Besides, there was
something special about
those two. By the time
they were five years old,
they were wiser than
anyone else in the village.

So both the men and the
women of the clan often
came to them for advice.

One day, a Beldy hunter
found that one of his
traps had been sprung,
but the animal was
missing. He could tell

from the signs that the
animal was a weasel and
it had been taken by a
man of the Zaksuli clan.
The hunter went to tell
the Beldy chief.
“This is a great insult!”
roared the chief.

“Prepare for war!”
All the Beldy men rushed
off eagerly to get ready
their spears, knives, bows,
and arrows.
“Not again!” cried the
chief’s wife. “Is a
weasel worth killing and

dying for?”
“We are men,” said the
chief. “Must a man not
fight?”
“You are men!”
screamed his wife.
“Must a man be
stupid?”

She went with the other
Beldy women to talk with
the twins. “Udoga,
Chubak, tell the men to
stay home. We’ve had
enough fighting and
killing!”
Chubak said to Udoga,

“She’s right, brother.
There’s been enough
war.”
Udoga told the women,
“We’ll see what we can
do.”
Not long after, the men
also came to the twins.

“Chubak, Udoga,” said
the chief, “give us your
counsel.”
Chubak picked up a
warrior’s bow. “Never
has a clan been so
insulted! If the thief had

taken a sable, we could

forgive him. The skin of a sable has value. But a weasel skin is almost worthless. It must have been taken just to shame us. If we are shamed, we have no honor. If we have no honor, we are dead.

The Zaksulis have killed us!”

Udoga picked up a spear. “The Zaksulis have killed us, so now we must kill them back. All their men must die. Death to the Zaksulis!”

“Death to the Zaksulis!” cried the men. “But wait!” said Udoga. “This is no ordinary war. The Zaksulis are so evil, the place where they live is evil too. We

must not let this evil touch us. We must take a vow not to eat any food from their land or drink a single drop of their water.” “We swear it! We swear it! Death to the

Zaksulis! Death to the Zaksulis!”

The women were sad. “What hope do we have,” said the chief’s wife, “when even the twins go to war.” So they set about

preparing the men’s food.

The next morning, the men loaded themselves with as much food and water as they could carry. Then, taking the twins with them, they

started off to the Zaksuli village.

They walked all day. It
was slow, hard going,
with all they had to
carry. So the farther
they went, the angrier
they were at the

Zaksulis.

At last they came
upon some Zaksuli
women gathering
berries. "Chubak called,
"You women! We are
coming to your village!
We won't leave a single

man alive!"

The women ran off to
warn their men.

"Why did you let them
know?" said the chief in
dismay. "With all we're
carrying, those women will
get to the village long

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Zaksuli chief. “Why
don’t you go back to
your village where you
belong!”

Then the women searched
for the Beldies in the
grass and the bushes.
When a woman found one,

she beat him with her
stick.
“Be brave!” cried Udogo
to the men. “Remember,
you must never hit a
woman!”
The chief called, “But
what if the

woman—OW!—does not
act—OW!—like a
woman?—OW!”
“What does that
matter?” called Chubak.
“We are men. How could
a woman hurt us?”
“OW!” replied the chief.

Day after day, they
waited for the Zaksuli
men. Day after day, the
women came out and beat
them. The Beldy men
were brave.
Then their food ran out.
“Remember your vow!”

Chubak told them. “We
will take no food from
this evil land!”
“But how can we fight
without food?” asked the
chief.
“Don’t worry!” said
Chubak. “It won’t be

long now!”
So they were brave a
little longer.
Then their water ran out.
“Remember your vow!”
said Udogo. “Not a drop
of water from this place
of evil!”

“But we can’t last long

without water,” said the chief.

“We won’t have to,” said Udogo. “We’ve almost won!”

So they were brave a little longer.

Then their patience ran out.

“What kind of war is this?” said the chief.

“We’re so weak from hunger and thirst, we can barely hold our spears!”

“We are men,” said

Chubak. “When honor is at stake, how can we complain of hardship?”

So they were brave a little longer.

At last the Zaksuli chief appeared. He came out to plead with the Beldy

chief. “Please,” he said, “can’t we talk and settle this without fighting?”

“How can talk restore honor?” said Udogo.

“We will be satisfied only by a great gift.”

“Yes,” said Chubak.

“A gift such as never given before.”

The Zaksuli chief trembled. “What do you want?”

Udogo said, “You must give us . . . the skin of

the weasel!”

Both the chiefs stared at the twins in astonishment. Then the Zaksuli chief ran back to tell the good news. The Beldy chief’s face grew red. “Was that

such a great gift? Is that why we starved and suffered? For nothing but the skin of a weasel?”

“The weasel skin sent

us to war,” said Chubak.
“Why shouldn’t it send
us home?”

When the Beldies got
back to their village, the
chief told his wife,
“What a war that was!
The most terrible war of
all! We never want to go
to war again!”
And they didn’t—thanks

to Udogo and Chubak.

There are a few more
stories in the second
volume.